

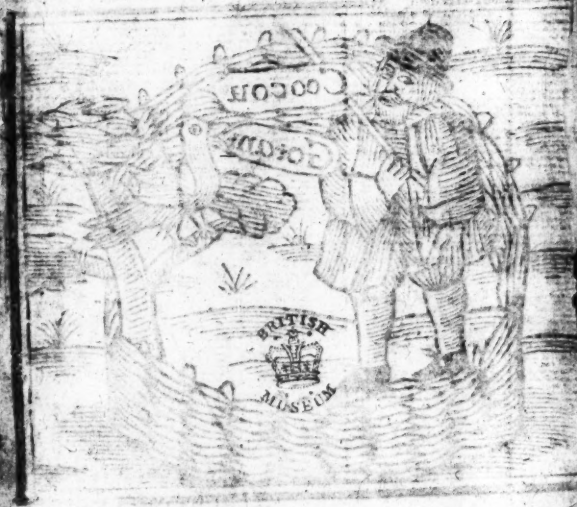
THE  
MERRY TALES  
OF  
The Mad-Men of Gotam.

By A. B. Doctor of Physick.



Printed by J. R. for G. Coniers, at the Golden-Ring,  
on Ludgate-Hill, and J. Deacon, at the Angel in  
Guilt-Spur-street without Newgate.

THE  
MERRY TALES



Printed by J. R. Smith, Strand, London.

Here beginneth certain Merry Tales of the  
Mad-Men of *Gotam*.

The first Tale.

**T**Here was two Men of *Gotam*,  
the one of them was going un-  
to the Market to *Nottingham*,  
to buy Sheep : and the other came from  
the Market, and both met together, up-  
on *Nottingham-Bridge* : Well met, said  
the one unto the other : whether be  
you going, said he that came from *Not-*  
*tingham* : Marry, said he, that was go-  
ing thither, I go to the Market to buy  
Sheep ; buy Sheep, said the other, and  
which way wilt thou bring them home ?  
Marry (said the other) I will bring them  
over this Bridge. By Robin Hood, said  
he that came from *Nottingham*, but thou  
shalt not : by Maid Marrin, said he that  
was going thitherward, but I will, thou  
shalt not said one, I will said the other :  
fer here, said the one ; thue there, said  
the other. Then they beat their  
staves against the ground, one against  
other, as there had been an hundred  
Sheep betwixt them. Hold in said  
one. Beware the leaping over the  
bridge of my Sheep, said the other. I

care not said the other. They shall not come this way, said the one ; but they shall said the other. Then said the other, and if that thou make much to do, I will put my finger into thy Mouth. A turd thou wilt, said the other. And as they were in contention, another Man of Gotam came from the Market with a sack of Meal upon his Horse, and seeing and hearing his Neighbours at strife for sheep, and none between them, said, Ah fools, will ye never learn wit : help me, said he, that had the Meal, and lay my sack upon my Shoulder : they did so, and he went to the other side of the bridge, & unlaced the Mouth of his Sack, and took out all the Meal into the River. Now Neighbours, how much Meal is there in my Sack now : marry there is none at all said they. Now by my faith, said he, even as much wit there is in your two heads, to strive for that thing which you have not.

Which was the wisest of all these three persons judge you ?

The second Tale.

**T**here was a man of Gotam, did ride to the Market with two bushels of wheat, and because his Horse should not bear heavy, he carried his Corn on his neck



neck, because his horse should not carry too heavy a burden. Judge you, which was the wisest his Horse or himself.

The third Tale.

**O**ne a time the men of Gotam, would have pinned in a Cuckow, whereby she should sing all the year : so in the midst of the Town they made an hedge, round in compass, and got a Cuckow and put therein, saying to her, sing here all the year, thou shalt lack neither meat nor drink. The Cuckow, as soon as she perceived her self incompassed within the hedge, flew away. A vengeance on her said they, we made not our Hedge high enough.

The fourth Tale.

**T**here was a man of Gotam, the which went to the market to Nottingham to sell Cheese, and as he was going down the Hill on Nottingham-bridge, one of his Cheeses did fall out of his Wallet and ran down the Hill. A whozsons, said the fellow, can you run to the Market alone ? I will send the one after the other of you. When he laid down his Wallet and took the Cheeses and did tumble them down the Hill one after the other, and some ran into one bush, and some into another. And at the last he said, I charge you all meet me in the Market place.

place, and when the fellows came into the Market-place to meet his Cheeses, he staid there till the Market was almost done, Then he went about and did enquire of his Neighbozs and other Men, if they did see his Cheeses come to the Market : who should bring them said one of the Market-men ? marry themselves, said the fellow, they knew the way well enough. He said a vengeance on them all, I did fear to see my Chæses run so fast that they would run beyond the Market : I am now fully perswaded that they be now almost at York : Whereupon he forthwith hired a Horse to ride after to York to see his Chæses, where they were not. But unto this day no man could tell him of his Cheeses.

The fifth Tale.

**T**Here was a Man of Gotam, who bought at Nottingham a Tribet, or a Bran-iron, and as he was going home, his Shoulders grew soze with the carriage thereof, and he set it down, and seeing it had threæ feet, said, a whorson, halt thou threæ feet, and I but two : thou shalt bear me home if thou wilt ; and so set it down on the ground, and late himself down thereupon, and said to his

his Tribet, bear me as long as I have bozn thee, for if thou dost not, thou shalt stand still for me. The Man of Gotam did see that his Tribet would go no further ; stand still, said he, in the Mayors name, and follow me if thou wilt, I will tell thee the right way to my home. When he did come home to his House, his Wife said, where is my Tribet : the Man said, he hath three Leggs and I but two, and I did teach him the way to my House, let him come home if he will. Where left you the Tribet. said the Wife : at Gotam hill, said the Man. The Wife did run and fetch home the Tribet her own self, or else she had lost it thzough her Husbands wit.

#### The sixth Tale.

**T**Here dwelt a Smith in Gotam, who had a Wasps Nest in the straw, in the end of his Forge : there came one of his Neighbours to have his Horse Shooed, and the Wasps were so busie, that the fellow was stung with a Wasp, he being angry, said, Art thou worthe to keep a Forge or no : to have Wethere here stung with Wasps. A Neighbour, said the Smith, be content, I will put them from their Nest by and by, immediately

diately he took a Caulter & heat it glowing hot & thrust into the straw at the end of the forge, and so let his forge on a fire, & burnt it up. Then said the Smith I told thee I would fire them out of their Nest.

The seventh Tale.

**W**hen that Good-Fryday was come, the Men of Gotham did cast their Heads together what to do with their white herrings, their red-herrings, their sprats, and salt-fish. One consulted with the other, & agreed that such fish should be cast into their pond or pool (the which was in the middle of the Town) that it might increase against the next year, and every man that had any fish left did cast them into the pool: one said, I have so many red Herrings, another said I have so many white-Herrings, a third said, I have so many sprats, a fourth said, I have thus many red Herrings, and the other said, I have so many salt-fishes; let all go together into the pool or pond and we shall live like Lords the next Lent. At the beginning of the next Lent following the men did draw the pond to have their fish, and there was nothing but a great Cel, Ah said they all, a mischief on this Cel, he hath eat up all our fish. What shall we do with him, said one to the other: kill

kill him said one of them, chop him all to pieces, said another, and a third said, let us drown him ; be it so, said they all, So they went to another pool or pond by, and did cast the Cel into the Water, lay there, said they, and shift for thy self, for no help thou shalt have of us ; and there they left the Cel to be drowned.

The eighth Tale.

**O**P a time the men of Gotam had forgotten to pay their Rent to their Landlord. The one said to the other, to morrow is our pay-day, & what remedy shall we find to send our money to our Lord : the one said, this day I have taken a quick Hare, & he shall carry it, for he is light of foot : be it so, said they all, he shall have a letter, and a purse to put in our money, and we shall direct him the ready way ; when the Letters were written & the money put in a purse, they did tye them about the Hares neck, saying, thou must go first to Loughborrough, and then to Leicester, & at Newark, there is our Lord, commend us to him, & there is his due. The Hare as soon as he was out of their Hands, he did run a clean contrary way : some cried to him, saying, thou must go to Loughborough first ;  
some

some said, let the Hare alone, he can tell a nearer way than the best of us all can do, let her go.

The ninth Tale.

**O**P a time there was one of Gotam, mowing in the Meads, and found a great Grasshopper ; he casts down his Sith, and run home to his Neighbors, and said, that there was a Devil in the field that hopped in the Grass : then there was every man ready with Clubs and Staves, with Halberds and other weapons to kill the Grasshopper : when they did come unto the place where the Grasshopper should be, said the one to the other let every man cross himself from the Devil, for we will not meddle with him, and so they returned again and said, we were blest this day that we went no further. Ah Cowards, said he that had the Sith in the Mead, help me to fetch my Sith, no said they, it is good to sleep in a whole skin : better to lose thy Sith, then to mar us all.

The tenth Tale.

**O**P a certain time there were twelve men of Gotam that did go a fishing, and some did wade in the Water : and some stood upon dry land, and when they went home ward, one said to the other  
we

we have ventured wonderful hard this day in wading, I pray God that none of us that did come from home be drowned : Harry, said the one to the other, let us see that, for there did twelue of us come out ; and they told themselves, and e-very man did tell eleuen, and the twelfth man did neuer tell himself. Alas, said one to the other, there is one of us drowned. They went back to the brook, where they had been fishing, and sought up and down for him that was drowned, and did make great lamentation. A Courtier did come riding by, and he did ask what it was they did seek, and why they were so sorry ? Oh said they, this day we went to fish in the brook, and there did come out twelue of us and one is drowned. Why, said the Courtier, tell how many be of you, and the one said eleuen, and he did not tell himself : Well, said the Courtier, what will you give me, and I will find out twelue men : Sir, said they all the money we have, Give me, the money, said the Courtier, and he began with the first and gave him a recumbendibus over the shoulders, that he groaned, and there is one ; so he serued all, that they groaned on the matter : when he did come to the last,

h e

he paid him a good, saying, here is the twelfth man. Gods blessing on your heart, said all the Company, that you have found out our Neighbour.

The Eleventh Tale.

**T**Here was a man of Gotam, that did ride upon the high way, and there he found a Cheese, & he pulled out his sword and bozed and pricked with the point of his sword to take up the Cheese, There did come another man by, & did alight & took up the Cheese, and did ride his way with it ; the man of Gotam did ride back to Nottingham, to buy a longer Sword to take up the Cheese, & when he had bought his sword retuned back, & when he did come to the place where the Cheese did lay, he pulled out his sword, & pricked the ground, saying. A murrain take it, if I had had this sword, I had had the Cheese my self, and now another hath got it.

The twelfth Tale.

**T**Here was a man of Gotam, & he did not love his Wife, and having fair hair, her Husband said divers times that he would cut it off, and he durst not do it, when she was waking, but when she was asleep : so on a night he took a pair of Shærs and laid them under his beds-head, which his Wife perceived,



& then she did call to one of her maids, & said, go to bed to my husband, for he is minded to cut off my hair to night : let him cut off thy hair, & I'll give thee as good a Kertle, as ever thou didst wear : the maid did so, & fained her self asleep, which the man perceiving, cut off her hair, and wrapt it about his sheers, and laid it under his beds head, & fell asleep. The Wife made her maid to arise, and took the hair and the sheers & went into the Hall, and there burnt the Hair : The man had a Horse, which he did love above all things (as she well did know) the good wife went into the husbands Stable and cut off the Horses tayl, & did wrap the sheers in the horse-tayl, & laid them under her husbands head. In the morning she did rise betimes, and did sit by the Fire kemberg of her Head, at last the Man did come to the fire, and seeing his Wife kemberg of her Head, marvelled much thereat. The Maid seeing her Master stand in a broken study, said, what a Devil ails the Horse in the Stable for he bleedeth sore : the good man ran into the Stable, and found that his Horse-tayl was cut off, he went to his beds head and did find his sheers wrapt up in his Horse-tayl, and did,

did come to his Wife, saying I cry thee mercy, for, I had thought that I had cut off thy hair to night, and I have cut off my horse Tayl : yea said she, self do, self have ; many a man thinketh to do another man a shrewd turn, and it turneth oft times to his own self.

The thirteenth Tale.

**T**here was a man of Gotham that laid a wager with his Wife that she should not make him a Cuckold : no said she, but I can : spare me not (quoth he) do what thou canst. On a time she hid all the spiggots and fausetts in the house, and she went into her Buttreys, and set a Barrel a broach, and cryed out to her Husband, and said, I pray you bring me hither a spiggot and a fauset, or else all the Ale will run out : the good man sought up and down and could find none, Come hither then said she and hold your finger, in the Tap-hole, she pulled out her finger, and the good man put in his. She then called unto her Taylor, which did dwell at the next doo, with whom she made a blind bargain : and within a while after she came to her Husband, and did bring a spiggot and fauset with her saying, pull out thy finger out of the Tap-hole gentle Cuckold, for you have lost

lost your bargain. I beshrew your heart  
for your labour, said the good man; make  
no such bargains then, said she, with me.

The fourteenth Tale.

**T**here was a man of Gotham had taken  
a young Buzzard, and to the eating  
of it did bid four or five Gentlemens  
Servants; the Wife had killed an old  
hood Goose, and she and two of her Gos-  
sips had eaten up the Buzzard, and the  
old Goose was laid to the fire for the Gen-  
tlemens Servants; and when they were  
come and the old Goose was set before  
them; what is this then said one of the  
men? the good man said, a good fat  
Buzzard. A Buzzard said they, it is an  
old Goose, and thou art a knave to  
mock us, and in great anger they de-  
parted out of his house and went home;  
the fellow was very sorry that the Gen-  
tlemens Servants were angry and did  
take a bag and did put in the Buzzards  
Feathers, and thought to go to them,  
and shew them the Feathers of the Buz-  
zard, and so to please them. The Wife  
prayed her Husband ere he went, to  
setch in a block for the Fire, and in the  
mean space she pulled out the Buzzards  
Feathers, and did put in the Goose sea-  
thers; the Man taking his Wallet or  
Bag,

bag, went to the Gentlemans servants and said, pray you be not angry with me, for you shall see here that I had a Buzzard, for here be the feathers : and he opened his bag and shooke out all the goose feathers ; the Gentlemans servants seeing the goose feathers, said why thou knave couldest thou not be contented to mock us at thine own house, but art come to mock us here ? the one took a waster in his hand, and did give him a dozen stripes, saying, take this for a reward, and hereafter mock us not any more.

#### The fifteenth Tale.

**T**here was a young man of Gotam, the which went a wooing to a fair Maid, his Mother warned him beforehand, saying, when thou dost look upon her, cast a Sheeps eye, and say, how do you sweet Pigs me ? the fellow went to the Butchers and bought seven or eight Sheeps Eyes, and when this lusty wooer did sit at dinner, he would look upon this fair Wench, and would cast in her face, a Sheeps eye. saying how do you sweet pigs me ? how do I ? said the Wench, Swines face why dost thou cast the Sheeps eye at me ? O sweet pigs

pigs-ni, have at thee another: I desire thee swines face, said the Wench. The fellow being abashed, said, What, sweet pigs-ni be content! for if you live until the next year, thou wilt be a foul Sow: Talk knave, walk, said she, for if thou do live until the next year, thou wilt be a stark knave, a lubber, and a fool. Here a man may see, that for a mans good will he shall have evil will and displeasure.

The sixteenth Tale.

**A** Mans wife of Götam was brought to bed of a man Child; the father did bid the Gossips, which were Children of eight or nine years of age. The eldest's name that should be Godfather, was named Gilbert, the second child was named Humphry, and the God-mothers name was Christabel. The friends of them did admonish them saying, that divers times they must say after the Priest: when all were come to the Church doore the Priest said, be ye all agreed of the name? be you, said Gilbert, agreed of the name? be you, said Humphry, agreed of the name? be you said Christabel, agreed of the name? The Priest said, wherefore be ye come hither? Gilbert said, wherefore be you come hither?

Humphry said, wherefore be you come hither? Christabel said, wherefore be you come hither? The Priest being much amazed, could not tell what to say, but whistled and said, whew: Gilbert whistled and said whew, Humphry whistled and so did Christabel. The Priest being angry, said, go home fools, go home fools, go home: go home, fools go home, said Humphry: go home fools, go home, said Christabel. The Priest then provided for Godfathers and God-mothers. Here a man may see that Children can do nothing without good instructions, and they be not wise that will regard Childrens words.

The seventeenth Tale.

**T**here was a man of Gotam the which should be married: and when the day of marriage was appointed, and the time come that they should be married together, the Priest said, say after me: the man said, say after me: the Priest said, say not after me such words, but say after me as I will tell thee: the fellow said, say not after me such words, but say after me as I will tell thee. The Priest said, thou dost play the fool and the knave to mock with the holy Sacrament of Matrimony. The fel-  
low

low said, thou dost play the fool and the knave to mock with the holy Sacrament of Matrimony. The Priest could not tell what to say, but said, what shall I do with this fool? the fellow said, what shall I do with this fool? Fare well, said the Priest, I will not marry thee. Howbeit the fellow by other men was instructed how to do, after that he was married. And I heard such a foolish prank played at Kingstone of late days.

The eighteenth Tale.

**T**here was a Scotchman the which did dwell at Gotam, and he had taken a house a little from London, and of it he would make an Inn, and to his sign he would have the Bores-head, and went to London to have a Bores-head made. He did come to a Carver or Joiner, saying in his mother tongue, I say speak, canst thou make me a bare head? yea, said the Carver. Then said the Scotchman, make me a bare head an oust youl, and thou shalt have twenty pence for thy hire. I will do it, said the Carver, on S. Andrews day before Christmas, which is named Youl in Scotland, and in England in the North: the Scotchman did come to London for his Bores-head, to set it at the door for a Sign. I say,

I speak, said the Scotchman, hast thou  
 made me a bare head? yes, said the car-  
 ver: and fetching him a mans head that  
 was bare, & said, Sir, here is your bare  
 head. I, said the Scotchman, the mi-  
 chle Devil is this a bare head? yea, said  
 the Carver. I say, said the Scottish  
 man, I will have a Bare head, like an  
 head as doth follow a Sew that hath  
 Gryces. Sir, said the Carver, I cannot  
 tell what is a Sew, and what is a gryce.  
 What ho son, knowest thou not a Sew  
 that will greet and groan, and her gry-  
 ces will run after her and cry aweek a-  
 week. O said the Carver, it is a Pig,  
 yea, said the Scottishman, let me have  
 her Fathers head made in timber, and  
 make me a bird, and set on her scalps,  
 and cause her to sing whip whir: the  
 Carver said, I cannot cause her to sing  
 whip whir. Who ho son, said the Scotch-  
 man, gat her as she should sing whip  
 whir. Here you may see that every man  
 doth delight in his own sence, or doth  
 rejoyce in his fantasie.

The nineteenth Tale.

**I**n old time when these aforesaid tesse  
 was (as Men of the Country repor-  
 ted) that such fantastical matters were  
 done at Gorani, which I cannot tell half,  
 the



the wives were gathered together in an ale-house, and the one said to the other, that they were all profitable to their husbands: which way good Cossip, said the ale-wife? The first said, I shall tell you good Cossips; I can neither bake, brew, nor I can do no work: wherefore I do make every day holiday, and I go to the Ale-house, because at all times I cannot go to the Church; and in the Ale-house I pray God to spere well my husband, and I do thinke my prayer should do him much more good then my labour if I should work. Then said the second, I am profitable to my husband in saving of Candles in Winter, for I do cause my husband and all my household-folke to go to bed by day-light, and to rise by day-light. The third wife said, and I am profitable to my husband in sparing of bread, for I will eat but little, for the drinking a gallon or two of good ale I care for no meat. The fourth wife said, I am loath to spend meat & drink at home in mine own house, wherefore I do go unto the Wine-Tavern at Nottingham, and to take wine & such things as God shall send me there. The fifth wife said, a man shall have ever more company in another mans house

house then his own, and most commonly in an Ale-house is the best chear in the Town: and for sparing of meat and drink, and other necessities, I go to the Ale-house. The sixth Wife said, my husband hath wool, and flax, and tow, and to spare it, I go to other mens houses to do other mens work. The seventh wife said, I do spare my husbands wood and coals, and do sit talking all the day by other mens fires. The eighth said, Beef, and Mutton, and Pork is dear, wherefore I do spare it, and do take Pig, Goose, Hen, Chicken, Cony and Capon, the which be of lower price. The ninth said, and I do spare my husbands Soap and lye, for whereas I should, Wash once a Week, I do Wash but once in a quarter of a year. Then said the Alewife, and I do keep my husbands Ale that I do brew from sowing, for whereas I was wout to drinke up all, now I leave never a drop.

The Twentieth Tale.

**O**N Ash-Wednesday the Priest of Gotam would have a Collation to his Parishoners, and said, Friends, the the time is come that you must use prayer and fasting, and alms-deeds, and this week come you to Myself, and I will tell

tell you more of my mind, but as for Prayers, I think there be not two persons in the parish can say their Pater-noster. As for fasting, you fast still, for you have not a good meals meat in the whole year: as for alms-deeds, what should you do to give any thing, that have nothing to take to? But when that you come to the shrift, I will tell you more of my mind after Mass. The good man that did keep the Ale-house did come to shrift, and above all things he confessed himself to be drunk divers times in the year, especially in Lent. The Priest said, in Lent thou shouldest most refrain from drunkenness, and abstain from drink, Not so, said the fellow, for it is an old proverb, that fish must swim; yea, said the Priest, it must swim in water. I cry you mercy, quoth the fellow, I thought it should swim in good ale.

So one after an other the Men of Gotam did come to shrift, and when they were shryven, the Priest said, I cannot tell what Penance to give you: if I should enjoin you to Prayer, there is none of you can say your pater-noster, and you be now too old to learn. And to enjoin you to Fast, it were

were but solituness; for you have not  
 to eat a good meales meat in a year;  
 Wherefore I do enioyn the to labour  
 well all the week that thou makest fare  
 well to dinner on the Sundays, and  
 I will come to dinner and see if it be so,  
 and take part: another man he diene  
 joynt to fare well on Monday, and wha-  
 ther on Tuesday, and one after another,  
 that one or other should fare well once a  
 week, that he might have a part of the  
 meat: and as for alms deeds, the Priest  
 saith, you be but beggars all, except it be  
 one or two, therefore bestow your alms  
 on your selves.

FINIS

60062

